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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### COVID-19 outbreak controls: Lesson learned from Islam



*Contrôle des épidémies de COVID-19: la leçon de l'Islam*

Infectious diseases have for centuries ranked with wars and famine as major challenges to human progress and survival [1]. Globalization and international travel allow infectious diseases to spread throughout countries and makes it difficult to control. Public health interventions and policies do not have a uniform response worldwide. Medical anthropologists appreciate the role of cultural epidemiology in establishing the community response and concomitantly the disease's fate [2].

In this letter, we highlight religious teachings of hygiene, infection control, and illnesses. Islam is a comprehensive religion that takes every aspect of life into account, including the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual aspects of human life. The recommendations for personal hygiene and cleanliness promote the well-being of individuals and communities. The Prophet Muhammad introduced hygienic practices more than 1400 years ago, for examples Muslims perform five daily prayers, where they must be in a physical purity by washing the hands, mouth, nose, face, wiping the head, ears, and washing feet three times. Performing this five times a day, it builds a culture of cleanliness and decreases the risk of infectious diseases. The Prophet, instructed Muslims to cover their faces when sneezing and coughing, this will minimize the spread of airborne bacteria and viruses.

Visiting the sick people is the greatest good deeds of Muslim. However, in cases of infectious diseases, the Prophet, recommended to his followers not to travel to places known to be afflicted with illness, and he advised those in the contaminated areas or communities not to leave and spread the disease further (Quarantine) (Sahih Bukhari). Therefore, the measures taken today by WHO and CDCs to prevent the spread of infections and viruses confirm exactly the hygiene and infection control practices taught by Prophet Muhammad [3].

Recently, the first case of the novel coronavirus was reported on December 30, 2019, in Wuhan city, Hubei province, P.R. China [4]. On February 12, the WHO named the 2019-nCoV pathogen as SARS-CoV-2 and the causing disease as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-2019). COVID-19 is a novel infectious disease that has been declared a pandemic. The number of cases has increased within a few

weeks, and later was spread beyond China border. The global response against COVID-19 is variable; for example, China government made very impressive work by prohibiting people from entering or leaving Wuhan city and Hubei province as a protective measure against the disease importation. China government have issued instruction and COVID-19 containment strategies for the ordinary people, clinicians, travelers and for infected patients to follow so that transmission to the healthy population can be prevented, and finally, they are successfully control a disease outbreak.

In contrast, in Europe and USA, the government was negatively responding to COVID-19 outbreak in the beginning, the outcome is the rapid increase in the number of cases and death. Thereafter, social distancing and restriction of people movements have been adopted by all countries to reduce the transmission of the disease. The religious teachings of hygiene, infection control, and illnesses messages could be conveyed in the affected people by reputable scholars and reach the millions of Muslims, some will respond positively. With the amicable relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, it is also possible that some non-Muslims will also take heed of these messages of general relevance to "show the collective responsibility and global solidarity absent at the start of this outbreak to bring it to an end".

COVID-19 pandemic became a new challenge, Scientist believes that the availability of virus genome sequence will assist in understanding the threat of pathogen, while others excepted One Health approach is mandatory to control and stop the spread of COVID-19 [5]. COVID-19 outbreak reminds all of us, regardless of our social standing, medical facilities, advance medical equipment's and our financial position, we are helpless. Allah says: "Mankind was created weak" (Quran 4:28). We all ask Allah for well-being and take measures to protect oneself by making quarantine, treat patients, and develop a vaccine against COVID-19.

#### Disclosure of interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interest.

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